

Rebuilding the German Education System (1946)

Abstract

This short clip is taken from a British documentary titled *A Defeated People*, which was shot in the British occupation zone in 1945/1946. It was produced by an organization within the British Ministry of Information that was tasked with making short information films and documentaries for the general public in Britain and other English-speaking countries. Depicting the state of Germany and its people after its defeat in the Second World War, the film documents the measures taken by the occupation forces to rebuild the country and outlines the work that lies ahead for the German population if it is to rejoin the international community. This segment of the film focuses on the challenge of denazifying and rebuilding the German education system while much of the country still lay in ruins.

Source

/...But the greatest headache is education. You will never get Nazi ideas out of the heads of some of the adults, particularly those living away from the devastated areas. What about the children? For them, the desolated landscape provides a dream playground. The derelict weapons of war might have been specially designed to have games with.

/There are Germans who know this can't go on. The teachers must be found and themselves taught to teach the children that there are other things in life beyond Nazism and war. But again, the complexity of problems. The schools are in ruins, the teachers too few, the children too many. And as the months go by, the children are growing up and getting more like their fathers.

/We just cannot afford to leave them to stew in their own juice.

Source: *A Defeated People*, Orientation film no. 28, United Kingdom, 1946. NARA. NAID: 36087

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